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Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-second session
10 June-5 July 2002
Agenda item 9
Adoption of the report of the Committee on the work of its forty-second session

Draft report

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Addendum

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Item 3

Progress in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on different methodologies that might be used to correct the geographical imbalance in hiring consultants

1. At its 19th meeting, on 25 June 2002, the Committee considered the note of the Secretary-General on progress in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on different methodologies that might be used to correct the geographical imbalance in hiring consultants (E/AC.51/2002/3). The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report.

Discussion

2. The view was expressed that it would have been preferable for the Secretariat to present not one but several options for discussion on this issue. Divergent views were expressed concerning the applicability of a geographical quota as a proper tool for achieving geographical balance for consultants and individual contractors.

3. The view was expressed that since it constituted a rather minor expense of the budget of the Organization, the search for a means to solve the problem of the imbalance in hiring consultants should not be a priority. Other views were expressed

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to the effect that, on the contrary, the issue was a matter of principle regardless of the costs involved.

4. It was observed that information on why certain Member States were not represented was not available.

5. The view was also expressed that there was some doubt about the results of the calculation as per the adopted methodologies, which identified some countries as overrepresented when they might not be so.

6. Divergent opinions were expressed on whether an in-depth multi-year study proposed by the Secretary-General should take place. The view was also expressed that a study was necessary but that it should be completed in a shorter period of time. It was noted that additional information should be provided, such as the ratio of postulants to posts, in order to allow a broader analysis of the context of the imbalance in hiring consultants.

7. The view was expressed that greater efforts should be made by the Secretariat to achieve geographical balance among consultants and individual contractors.

8. One delegation expressed concern that due regard be given to merit in the hiring of consultants and contractors. The Secretariat assured the Committee that current practice and procedure would be maintained when giving consideration to correcting the geographical imbalance.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. **The Committee took note of the note of the Secretary-General on progress in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on different methodologies that might be used to correct the geographical imbalance in hiring consultants (E/AC.51/2002/3).**

10. **The Committee recommended that the Secretariat make greater efforts to ensure geographical balance among qualified consultants and individual contractors, and that the General Assembly further consider the matter at its fifty-seventh session in the context of the relevant item.**